



AKRON HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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March 10, 2010 Update on the Process to Consolidate Public Health Services

Those involved in the public health system within Summit County routinely seek to improve public health service to all residents of Summit County. One service delivery model that has been proposed and has been studied in depth over the past year is a consolidation of the services of the Akron Health Department and the Summit County General Health District. Representatives of the Akron Health Department, the Summit County General Health District, their respective Boards of Health, the City of Akron and Summit County councils and administrative bodies, and other public health stakeholders have been involved in this study and have recently recommended consolidating the public health services offered by the Akron Health Department and those of the Summit County Combined General health District, what the Ohio Department of Health would call a unified General Health District within Summit County.

While significant commonalities in structure and service were recognized, there were a number of questions to be answered and issues to be resolved for such an arrangement to be feasible. The consolidation feasibility study group, hosted by Akron Tomorrow and chaired by William Considine of Children's Hospital Medical Center of Akron, identified and studied eight critical issues to be considered prior to making a recommendation as to the feasibility of a consolidation of the Akron City Health Department and the Summit County General Health District. These eight critical issues are: Governance, Personnel, Finance, Public Health Services, Location/Facilities, Legal, Timetable, and Community/Stakeholder Inclusion.

The study group enlisted the assistance of an external consultant to facilitate a 6 month study. The consultant's report was presented to the study group on February 10, 2010 and the study group unanimously endorsed the finding of that report. All agreed consolidating the public health services delivered by these two entities into one health district was not only feasible but that doing so presented numerous opportunities to improve services to the residents served by the health districts individually. This determination rested on several commitments agreed to by both the City of Akron administration and the Summit County Health District. These commitments regarding a continued public health presence in downtown Akron, sufficient financial support to assure that all current Akron Health Department personnel would be transitioned, and that terms of separation from the City of Akron would be settled prior to the transition of personnel have been documented in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed on March 10, 2010 by the Mayor of Akron and the Health Commissioner of the Summit County Combined General Health District representing the Summit County Board of Health.

All governing bodies remain committed to assuring the successful transition to the consolidation of public health services via a contract with the Summit County Board of Health by January 1, 2011.

Transition teams have been meeting on a regular basis to align staff and programming needs to assure high quality programming is matched with appropriately supported personnel. Multiple departments of the City of Akron continue to work together to assure the issues regarding the transition of Akron personnel to County Health Department employment are handled appropriately in as satisfactory a manner as is possible to all involved.